

REMARKS

In view of the above amendatory matter and remarks to follow, reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2 and 5 have been amended. Claim 6 has been cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1-5 are presented for reconsideration.

Claims 2 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. The examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for "the frame member" in claims 2 and 5. The phrase "the frame member" in claims 2 and 5 has been changed to "a frame member." It is requested that the rejection of claims 2 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Motoda (U.S. Patent 4,588,341) in view of Araake (GB 2337325A). Claims 2 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Motoda in view of Araake and further in view of Schell (U.S. Patent 3,951,228). Claims 3, 4 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Motoda in view of Araake and further in view of Selusnik (U.S. Patent 3,974,922).

Independent claims 1 and 5 have been amended to recite the following:

"the ionized air flows in a direction opposite to a direction of where the products are transported and passes under a lid member, while forming a flow passage parallel to the lid member, and then mainly proceeds within a space disposed between an inner wall side surface and a plate being the outer wall by suction force of an exhaust fan, so that the air proceeding

within the space reaches the exhaust fan and is exhausted to an outside of the stocker apparatus by the exhaust fan”

Support for this recitation is set forth in the application as originally filed from page 29, line 22 to page 30, line 14 (referring to the English-language translation of the PCT application)(paragraphs [0109] and [0110] of U.S. published application no. US2006/0127204A1).

It is submitted that none of the cited references discloses these particular features now recited in independent claims 1 and 5. In particular, Araake, which the examiner relies upon for allegedly teaching an ionizer, neither discloses nor suggests various features recited in claims 1 and 5, including at least that (1) the ionized air flows in a direction opposite to a direction of the transport of the products; and (2) the ionized air proceeds within a space between the inner wall side surface and a plate that is the outer wall via a suction force caused by an exhaust fan. The other cited references likewise neither disclose nor suggest at least these recited features.

On the other hand, the present invention with such non-obvious features provides various advantages including providing a relatively quicker flow of air over the products due to the flow of the ionized air in the opposite direction of the direction the products are transported which in turn provides for better removal of dust that adheres to the products; and the ionized air is more efficiently exhausted (using an exhaust fan) by flowing through the space that is provided between the inner wall side surface and a plate that forms the outer wall. These features are more particularly discussed in the application in the paragraphs referenced above.

Since none of the cited art discloses or suggests particular features of independent claims 1 and 5, as discussed above, claims 1 and 5 are patentably distinct and unobvious of the cited prior art. It is therefore requested that the rejection of claims 1 and 5, as well as dependent claims 2-4, be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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